

Mechanic works 75 years to break record

21st July, 2017



An airline worker in the USA has broken the world record for the world's longest-serving airline mechanic. Azriel Blackman, 91, started work in 1942 at the age of 16. He has now been working for 75 years. His starting salary was 50 cents an hour. The nonagenarian still

works five days a week. He clocks on before 5am at an American Airlines hangar at JFK International Airport in New York. His age means his employers prevent him from doing certain tasks for safety reasons. He is not allowed to scale ladders, drive on the runways and surrounding areas, or use certain tools. He is responsible for assessing the maintenance needs of the airplanes that have been parked in the hangars overnight.

Mr Blackman's record has been recognized for his dedication to his job. His employer dedicated a plane in his honor at a ceremony at JFK. His signature was painted in giant letters on the front of one of the airline's Boeing 777 aircraft. Blackman said: "I'm just honored to be here. I'm proud to be a mechanic." The 91-year-old received a standing ovation from his fellow colleagues and managers at the ceremony. Reporters asked him about the secret behind his record. He said: "When you like what you do, it's not work." When asked about retirement, he said: "That's not up to me. That's up to the man upstairs. The first thing I do when I get up in the morning is I say 'thank you for another day'."

Sources: bbc.com / nytimes.com / dallasnews.com

Writing

The retirement age should be increased to 75 years old. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

airline worker / world record / mechanic / starting salary / age / employers / safety / dedication / ceremony / signature / standing ovation / colleagues / secret / retirement

True / False

- The mechanic started work when he was 13. T / F
- The mechanic's starting salary was 50 cents a week. T / F
- The mechanic starts work at five in the morning. T / F
- The mechanic has to climb ladders to clean the airplane windows. T / F
- The mechanic signed the front of an airplane. T / F
- The mechanic's name was painted on a Boeing 777. T / F
- The mechanic's colleagues stood up and applauded him. T / F
- The mechanic doesn't know when he will retire. T / F

Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- | | |
|----------------------|------------------|
| 1. servicing | a. evaluating |
| 2. salary | b. magic formula |
| 3. prevent | c. loyalty |
| 4. scale | d. pay |
| 5. assessing | e. applause |
| 6. dedication | f. working |
| 7. ovation | g. climb up |
| 8. colleagues | h. an additional |
| 9. secret | i. stop |
| 10. another | j. coworkers |

Discussion – Student A

- How did this article make you feel?
- What do you think of Mr Blackman?
- At what age would you like to retire?
- What would it be like to be an airline mechanic?
- How might Mr Blackman's job have changed over the years?
- Should people in their nineties be working?
- What things should Mr Blackman not be allowed to do?
- How skilled do you think Mr Blackman is?

BreakingNewsEnglish - The Mini Lesson

Phrase Match

- | | |
|--|-----------------------------|
| 1. the world's longest- | a. to his job |
| 2. His starting salary | b. behind his record |
| 3. scale | c. maintenance needs |
| 4. He is responsible for assessing the | d. in giant letters |
| 5. airplanes that have been parked in | e. was 50 cents an hour |
| 6. recognized for his dedication | f. ladders |
| 7. His signature was painted | g. upstairs |
| 8. received a standing | h. the hangars overnight |
| 9. the secret | i. ovation |
| 10. That's up to the man | j. serving airline mechanic |

Discussion – Student B

- What do you think about what you read?
- What do you think of Mr Blackman's signature being painted on a plane?
- What do you think of American Airlines for recognizing Mr Blackman?
- What is your favorite airline and why?
- What is the best age to retire?
- What would you like to do in your retirement?
- Who is 'the man upstairs'?
- What questions would you like to ask Mr Blackman?

Spelling

- the world's longest-gesnrvi airline mechanic
- The aeinagnanno still works five days a week
- prevent him from doing ncatrei tasks
- the runways and uurrsgonid areas
- responsible for assessing the eemnanintca needs
- airplanes that have been parked in the rnsgha
- his tniadodice to his job
- at a eryeconm at JFK
- His ugateirsn was painted in giant letters
- The 91-year-old received a standing iatonvo
- his fellow oelalcgues
- When asked about ertnretmei, he said...

Answers – Synonym Match

1. f	2. d	3. i	4. g	5. a
6. c	7. e	8. j	9. b	10. h

Role Play

Role A – Taxi Driver

You think a taxi driver is the best job for a 90-year-old. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their jobs. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these of these (and why): a tour guide, a teacher or a doctor.

Role B – Tour Guide

You think a tour guide is the best job for a 90-year-old. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their jobs. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these of these (and why): a taxi driver, a teacher or a doctor.

Role C – Teacher

You think a teacher is the best job for a 90-year-old. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their jobs. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these of these (and why): a tour guide, a taxi driver or a doctor.

Role D – Doctor

You think a doctor is the best job for a 90-year-old. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their jobs. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these of these (and why): a tour guide, a teacher or a taxi driver.

Speaking – Jobs

Rank these with your partner. Put the best jobs for a 90-year-old at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- | | |
|------------|---------------|
| • chef | • taxi driver |
| • teacher | • tour guide |
| • musician | • gardener |
| • doctor | • journalist |

Answers – True False

a	F	b	F	c	T	d	F	e	F	f	T	g	T	h	T
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.